

# Artiz2011

## Culture Jamming

Disrupting the (information) Flow



Mentalgassi,  
Germany, 2011

**Mitch Goodwin**  
Coordinator, New Media Arts  
James Cook University

“

**Unleash the fiend, invoke your dark side, vandalise everything. Stand in the middle of traffic and dance. Return favours twofold, and return malice fivefold. Insert tiny propaganda bombs into publications and news-stands everywhere.**

**Defy TV, denounce everybody, see through everything, place disturbing classified ads in newspapers, toss money at people, paint targets on cars, streak, defy classification, get yourself on TV.**

**Start a church, cross dress, write several conflicting autobiographies, be politically incorrect, make love to anything, make war on everything. Look normal, be insane.”**

- Social Activism In the Information Age | [headspace #4](#) | abc.net.au | 1998

# The Pretext Consumer Culture

## Manufacturing Desire

“What makes a good advertiser good is precisely his or her ability to make us want something we did not previously feel any need for... Advertisers are therefore the contemporary world’s leading experts at instilling desire and manufacturing longing – injecting us with images, humour and state of the art graphics, as a virus might be injected via a finely tuned hypodermic needle.”

- Mark Kingwell | *Better Living* |  
Penguin, Toronto | 1998



The Rolling Stones  
| ‘the tongue & lip’ design | 1971



Windows 1995 “boot screen”  
| Microsoft | 1995

# The Pretext

## Consumer Culture

### The Ideological Critique

- The major criticism of the consumer is aimed at the large sums of money invested in items which do not provide lasting satisfaction or happiness
- This is compounded by the enormous investment large companies make in the promotion of these products
- **EG.** The Gillette company spent US\$1 billion developing and marketing the Mach 3 razor in 2005; Microsoft spent \$10 million on 30 seconds of the Rolling Stone's *Start Me Up* to launch Windows OS in 1995.
- As a result consumer society would appear to be governed by commercially driven priorities which a person would not endorse upon rational reflection



The Mach 3  
| Gillette | May 2005

# The Pretext

## Consumer Culture

### The Perfectionist Critique

- On the other hand we could assume that consumers are actually getting by large what it is that they want when they enact the role of “consumerist”.
- Is it possible that the consumer is purchasing into ‘goodness’ - where the good is the ‘image’, not good itself?
- In other words an association with the ‘good’ via the consumption of product is an attempt to correct the imperfection in the consumerist lifestyle.
- The creation of wants and needs breeds inequality, imperfection and emptiness; this critique suggests the consumerist can be cured of this ill via consumption and that this ‘need’ is manufactured by the corporation



Diet Pepsi  
| 'new look, same great taste'  
| 1991

# The Pretext Consumer Culture

## The Liberal Critique

- From this point of view, it is not the preference for product or the effects of marketing which are dubious but the cycle of consumer behaviour.
- As 'we' work more we spend more. We spend more on leisure and we aspire to more "positional" consumption
- A positional product, holds value as a commodity and a narrative. It positions the owner above or beyond the fellow consumer. This in turn can create a "keeping up with Jones's" mentality – feeding the cycle.



Royal Doulton | 1871



Mercedes Benz | 1923

**The Question**

**Why Culture Jamming?**



# The Question

## Why Culture Jamming?

### A Definition

- “Jamming” originally was CB radio term for interfering with a conversation or a transmission by making obscene remarks or juvenile noises
- “Media Hacking” is another term which is often used which sits nicely alongside the notion of the Activist as Hacker. However this suggests that the Jammer is exclusively software dependent.



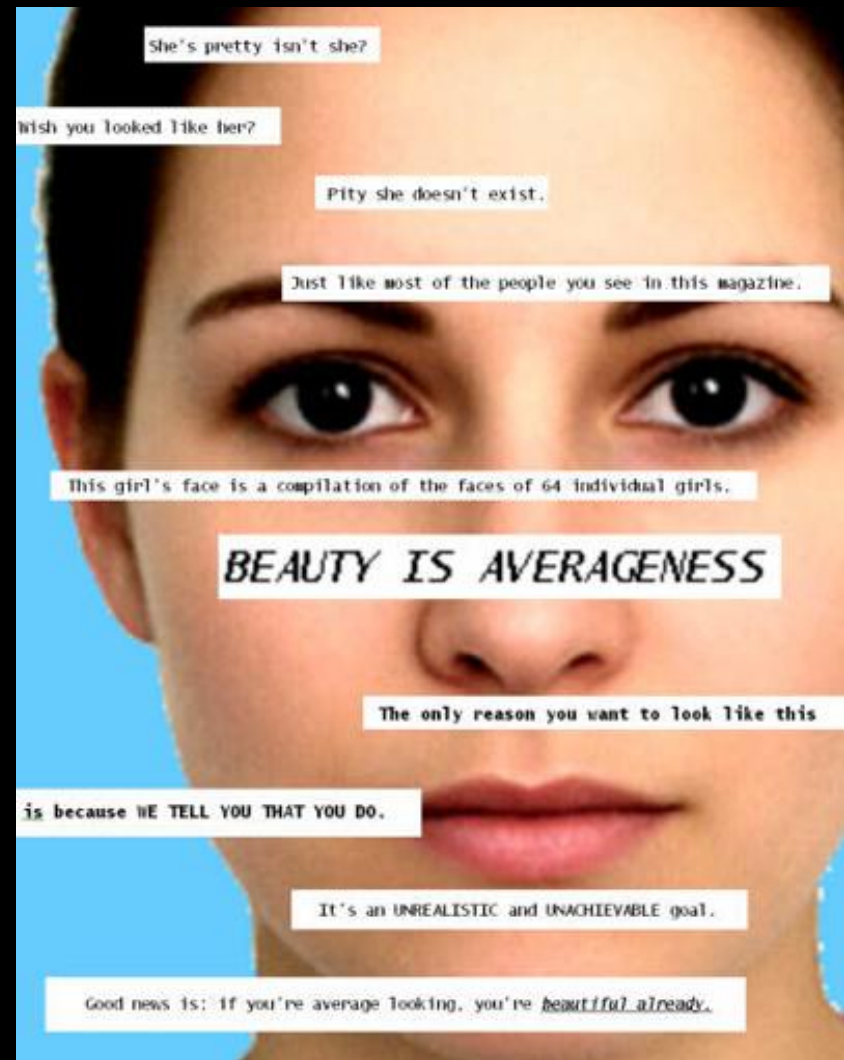


# The Question Why Culture Jamming?

## A Definition

"Culture jamming, by contrast, is directed against an ever more intrusive, instrumental technoculture whose operant mode is the manufacture of consent through the manipulation of symbols."

- Mark Nery | *Culture Jamming: Hacking, Slashing and Sniping in the Empire of Signs*



# **The Evidence**

## **Jams & Jammers**

# The Evidence Toyota



THE ANSWERING MACHINE  
FOR THE CALL OF THE WILD.

From a rugged mountain vista to deep in the plush forest, nature calls out for us. And the 1997 Toyota 4Runner, available in either 2-wheel or 4-wheel drive, is one of the only machines capable of answering that challenge. With a powerful 183-hp V6 engine\* and the highest ground clearance in its class, you'll be able to handle almost anything nature may throw at you. And with 4Runner's roomy interior and available leather-trimmed seats, civilization's never really that far away. The 1997 Toyota 4Runner. Your answer for the call of the wild.

Call 1-800-GO-TOYOTA or visit our website at: <http://www.toyota.com> for a brochure or full-size CD-ROM plus the location of your nearest dealer. ©1996 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. Buckle Up! Or 4 for those who love you. \*Toyota reserves the right to change engine specifications without notice. 1997 models. Vehicle shown with optional equipment.

**TOYOTA 4RUNNER**  
I love what you do for me

Nature...

IT'LL GROW BACK

**Damage**  
POISON FOR THE ROAD

1996 ABRUPT

# The Evidence

## Nike



# The Evidence

## Google

Google™

Googlag

exporting censorship, one search at a time

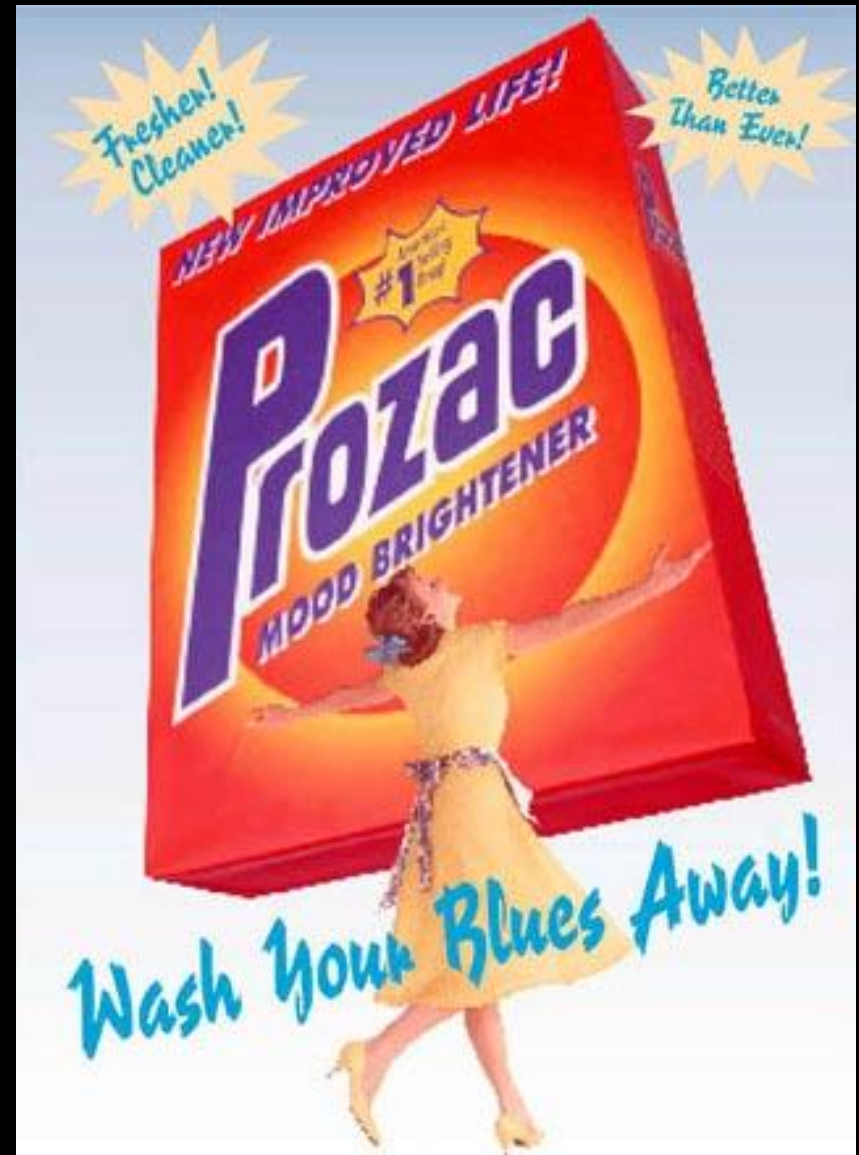


# The Evidence

## Coca Cola

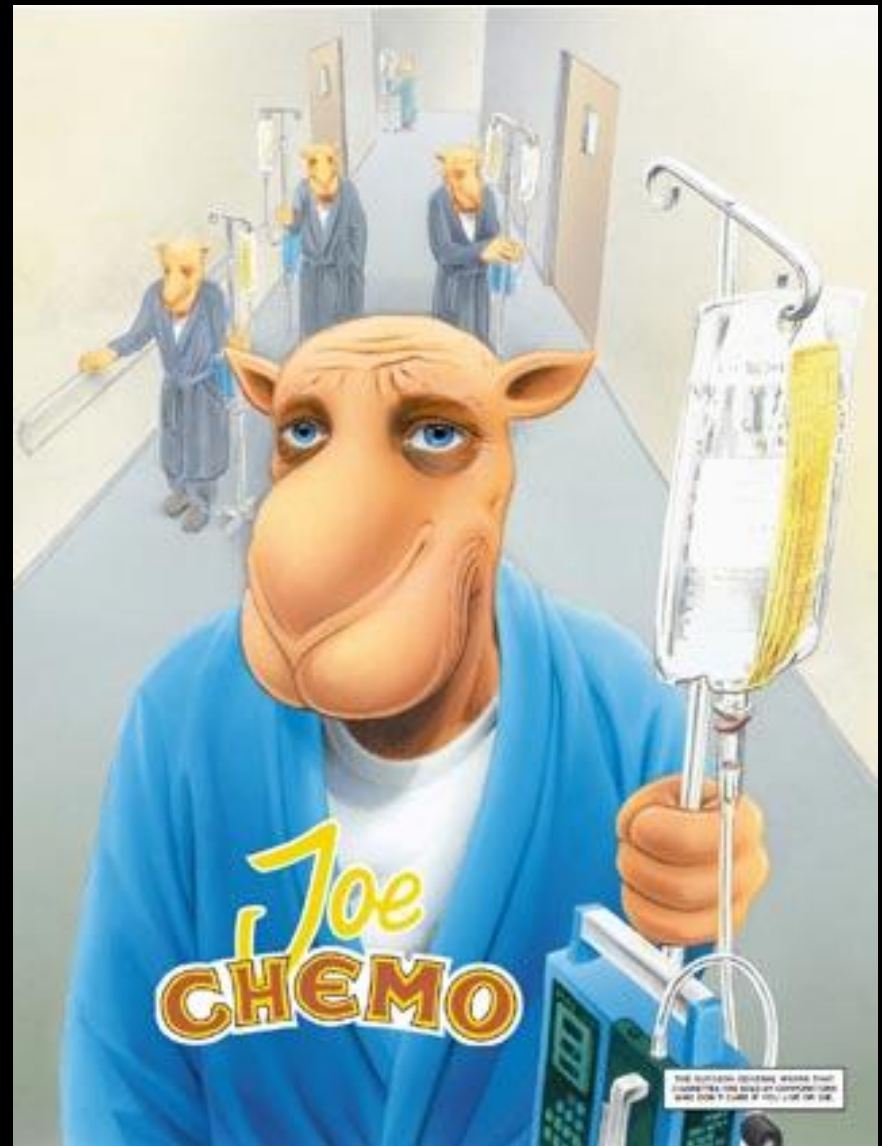
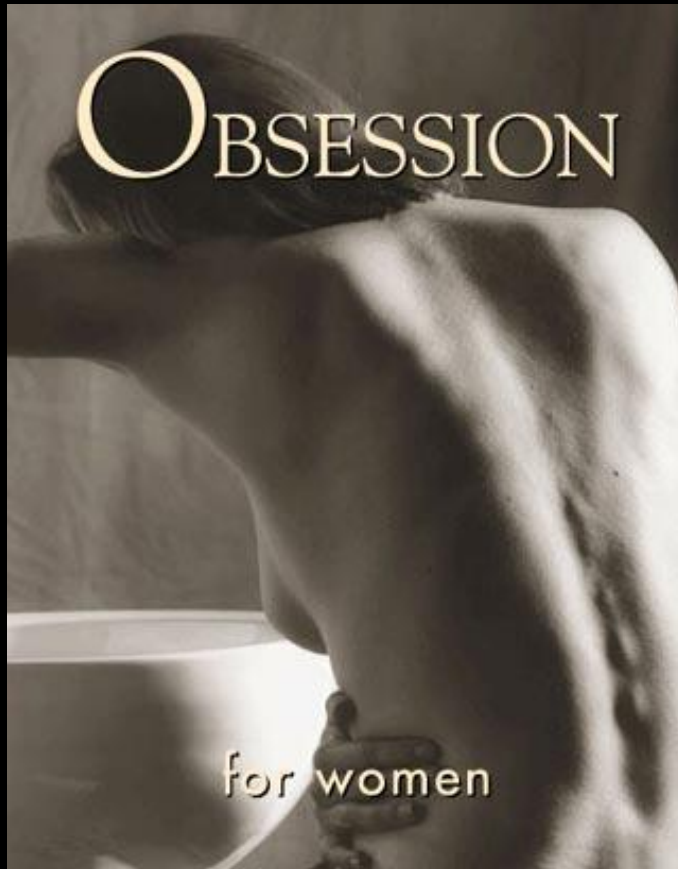
The image shows the classic Coca-Cola logo in its signature red script font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the bottom right of the logo.

# The Jammers Adbusters





# The Jammers Adbusters



**The Jams**

**Print Collateral Subversion**

# The Jams

## Paris Hilton by Banksy



In 2006 Paris Hilton released her self titled album *Paris*. Well known street artist, agitator and social commentator Banksy made alternate sleeve designs for the CD package and surreptitiously replaced 100s of the originals in record stores all over London.

# The Jams

## Paris Hilton by Banksy



Banksy | Paris Hilton | September 2006



# The Jams

## Paris Hilton by Banksy



Banksy | Paris Hilton | September 2006

# The Jams

## The Decapitator



“The Decapitator” is a street artist/ agitator/ prankster who decapitates the models and subjects of fly posters, billboards and bus stops in and around London

Razor Mobile phones |  
The London paper |  
London |  
2007

# The Jams

## The Decapitator



Chardon Champagne | Bus Stop | London | 2007



# The Jams

## The Decapitator



BT Telecom | Billboard | London | 2007



Dimitri from Paris |  
Fly Poster|  
London |  
2007

# The Jams

## Are You Generic (.org)



A simple and fun do-it-yourself jam -- just print the PDF on label sheets and stick 'em on all the commercial magazines you love to hate.

<http://www.areyougeneric.org/confessions/>

# The Jams

## Are You Generic (.org)



**The confessions of a generic magazine:**  
“We loaded this issue with more advertising than content. The content we did publish was edited, censored and manipulated to please our advertisers or as lame filler between the product pushing ads. We got paid quite handsomely to produce this issue and are glad you will pay to read what we already got paid to print. Are You Generic?”



# The Jams

## Are You Generic (.org)



**2.5 Hours.**  
**3 Neighbourhood**  
**Bookstores.**  
**56 Magazines.**  
**1 Message:**

**We miss content.**

# The Jams

## Together We Can Defeat Capitalism



In 1998 commuters riding the San Francisco Bay Area's Rapid Transit System (BART) were presented with a puzzling choice of train destinations. In addition to final stops such as Daly City, Fremont, and Richmond, every 10 minutes the platform video monitors display the arrival of a train bound for "Capitalism" with the information "Stops at Nothing" beneath.

<http://www.samasama.org/video/video.html>

Capitalism Stops At Nothing  
| TWCDC | San Francisco | 1998

# The Jams

## Together We Can Defeat Capitalism



Similarly they co-opted an electronic street sign and reprogrammed its sequence to comment on the recent dotcom crash on Wall Street.

Stock Market Crash Ahead |  
TWDC |  
San Francisco |  
2000

# Street Culture

## Paste Ups



# Street Culture

## Paste Ups



Jerm, 2010



London, 2008

# Street Culture

## Paste Ups

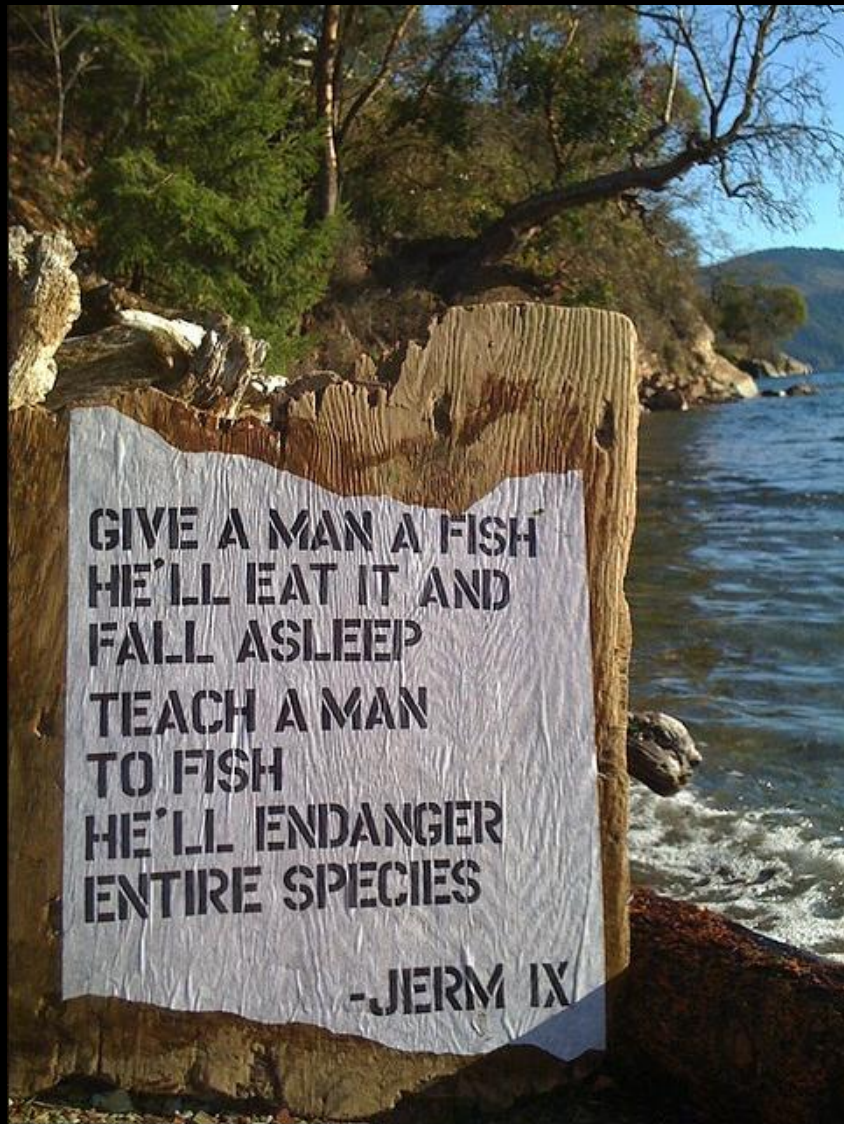


Melbourne, 2010



Paris, 2008





Vancouver, 2009



Melbourne, 2011





Italy, 2010



Berlin, 2007





Shepard Fairey,  
Amsterdam, 2009

# Culture Jamming

Disrupting the (information) Flow

[http://screenculture.com/stuff/Artiz\\_2011.zip](http://screenculture.com/stuff/Artiz_2011.zip)

**Mitch Goodwin**

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# Case Study

## The iPod Jam



# Case Study

## iPod Marketing



A little over a month after September 11 and as the bombs started to fall in Afghanistan, Steve Jobs, Apple CEO, introduced the first iPod.

**21<sup>st</sup> October 2001**

# Case Study

## iPod Marketing

# Case Study

## iPod Marketing



TBWA | [Apple](#) |  
San Francisco |  
September, 2003

# iPod Campaign 2003

## The Initial Disruption

### Object as Interruption

- The highly successful design for the iPod advertising campaign of 2003, by the TBWA design firm, is now considered to be emblematic of the MP3/iPod generation
- The design signifies the first expression of the “new cool” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- In and of itself this campaign was somewhat of a “disruption”, coming as it did so close behind the Napster debate and the demonising of the “MP3”



TBWA | [Apple](#)  
| Macworld magazine | September, 2003



# iPod Campaign 2003

## The Initial Disruption

### Object as Interruption

“Our Disruption was to celebrate music, not what was wrong with it. And using the white iPod as the iconic symbol of the digital music revolution....

The creative executions were silhouette images of many types of dancers, all holding an iPod in one hand and dancing with complete freedom. Set against neon bright colors, the aesthetic stood out among all types of media environments.”

- Duncan Miller, TBWA iPod campaign Producer



TBWA | [Apple](#)  
| TV Spot | September, 2003

iRaq

## **The Evolution of An Idea**

# iRaq

## The Evolution of An Idea

### Object as Interruption

- The ubiquitous success of the iPod campaign and its connotations of “revolution” and new found “freedom” for music lovers and the much maligned MP3 also presented an opportunity to artists, pranksters and jammers alike
- This was after all the first six months of the Iraq War when concepts such as liberation, freedom and revolution were running thick and fast in the mainstream media.
- The irony that iPod somehow represents liberty and freedom while it significantly reduces one’s senses was not lost on many jammers

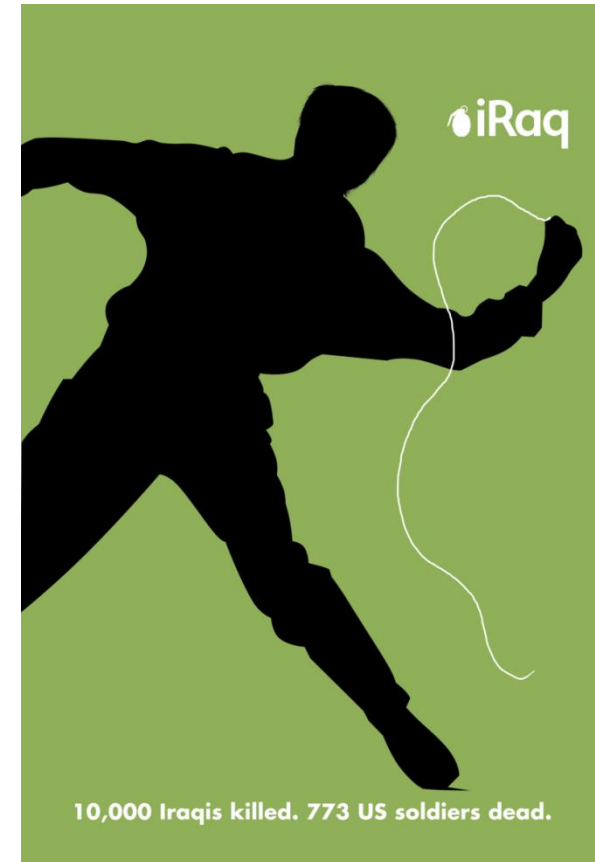


# iRaq

## The Evolution of An Idea

### Object as Interruption

- Many critiques, jams and interruptions were performed and deployed on and around the iPod campaigns of 2003 and 2004



Unknown | iRaq | 2004

Unknown | Bond & Bunny | 2004



iRaq

# The Evolution of An Idea

## Object as Interruption

- And so the inevitable political jamming of the consumer product advertisement.
- Using an iconic image of an Abu Ghraib detainee photographed by the US military and paraded on TV and in newspapers by the world's media, “Copper Greene” created one of the most disquieting propaganda jams of recent times.
- The name of the artist, “Copper Greene” is taken from the secret army division of the US Military created by Donald Rumsfeld to carry out covert “interrogations”.



Copper Greene | iRaq | London | 2004

# iRaq

## The Evolution of An Idea

### Object as Parody

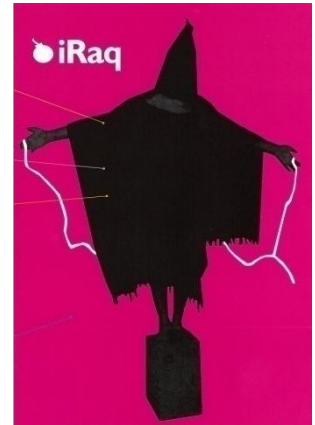
- As a piece of ultra “subversive parody” the culture jammers have managed to use the pre-existing power of the ubiquitous design and infuse it with a sharply observed political message
- The new reconstituted image is layered with meaning which goes well beyond the poster’s original context:
- The outstretched arms
- The awkward pose
- The electrical wires
- The pointed hood



Copper Greene | iRaq | Poster | 2003

iRaq

## The Historical Incident



2005 Abu Ghraib prison



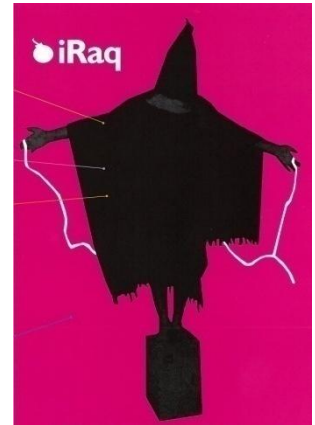
2000 Gaza crossfire

France 2 via Associated Press. "A Palestinian and his 12-year-old son cowered behind a cement block from crossfire between Palestinians and Israeli troops in Gaza. Moments later the son was dead and the father wounded."



iRaq

# The Historical Incident



1989 Tianamen Square

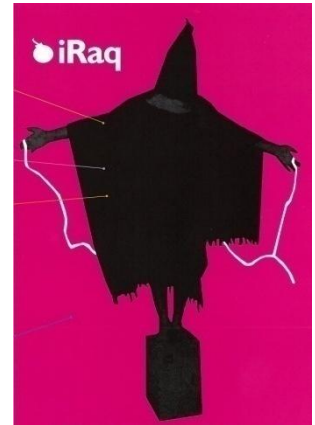


1972 Children fleeing a napalm strike,  
Vietnam, 8 June 1972.  
Huynh Cong (nick) Ut.



iRaq

## The Historical Incident



1963 Thich Quang Duc

Vietnamese Buddhist monk who burned himself to death; an act of self-immolation in protest against the manner in which the current government was oppressing the Buddhist religion.



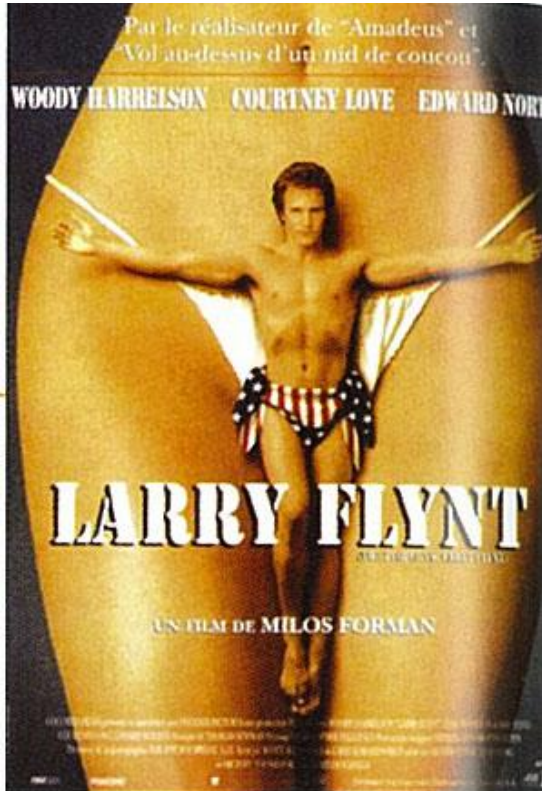
1936 The Fallen Soldier

p:Robert Capa

Photograph taken during the Spanish Civil War.

iRaq

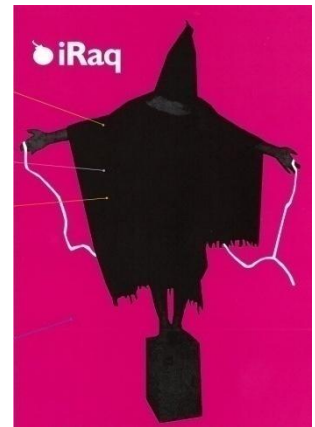
## The Iconic Pose



1996 The People vs. Larry Flynt movie poster

Directed by Milos Forman.

Poster ©Columbia Pictures Corporation.



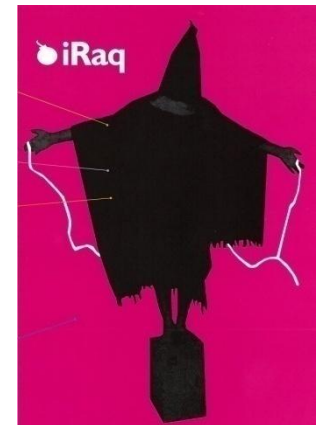
1991 It's Our Pleasure to Disgust You poster

by Barbara Kruger



# iRaq

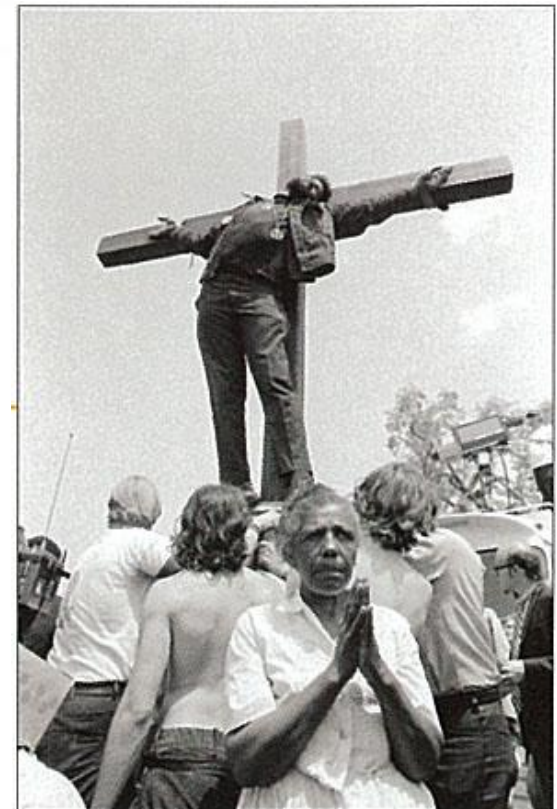
## The Iconic Pose



1970 Street Theatre

p:David Fenton

A mock crucifixion during an antiwar rally, Washington D.C., May 9, 1970.



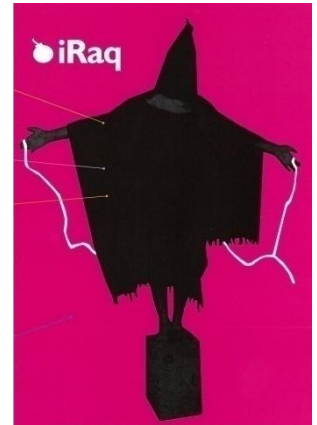
1975 L'Espresso magazine cover  
d:unknown

iRaq

## The Iconic Pose



1968 **Black Moses** album cover for Isaac Hayes  
ad: The Graffiteria/David Krieger  
p: Joel Brodsky

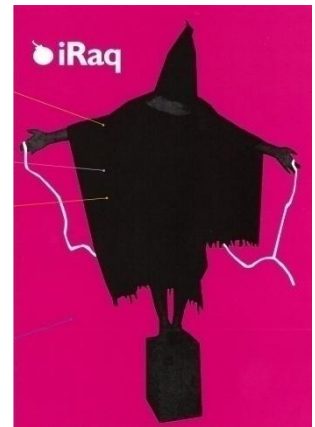


c1820 **Disasters of War** etching  
a: Francisco de Goya

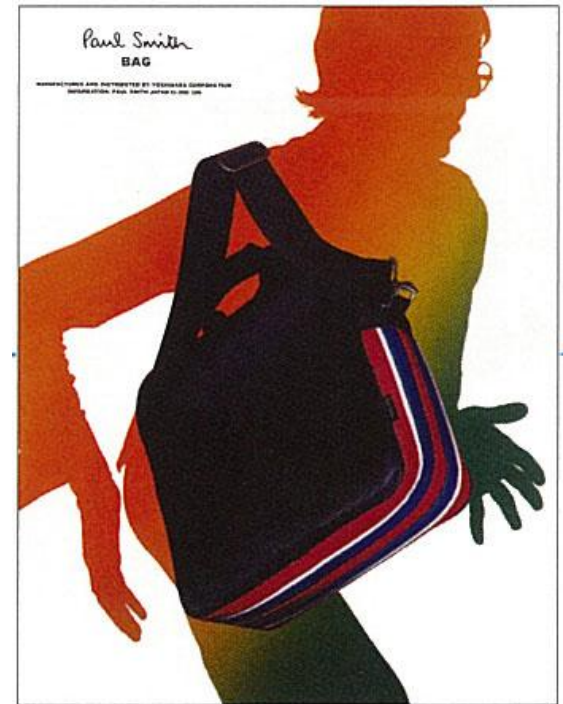


# iRaq

## The Graphic Design



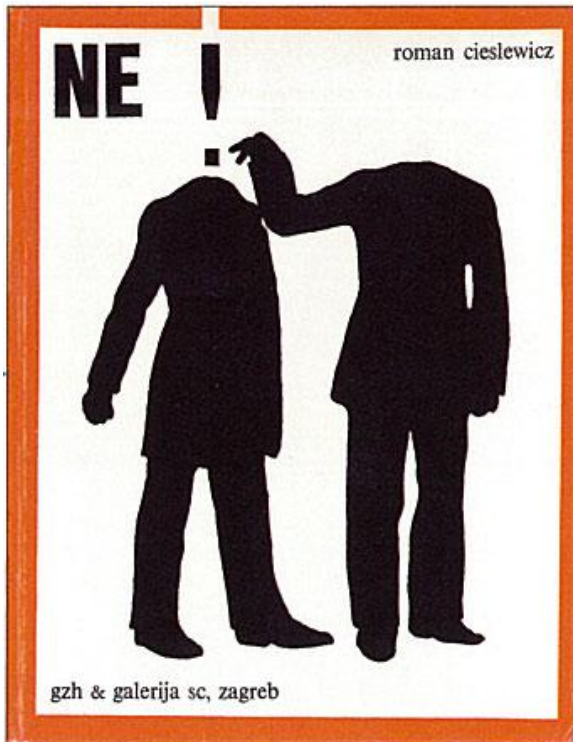
2004 iPod ad campaign  
s:TBWA/CHIAT/DAY



1999 Paul Smith Bag  
ad,d,p:Aboud Sodano

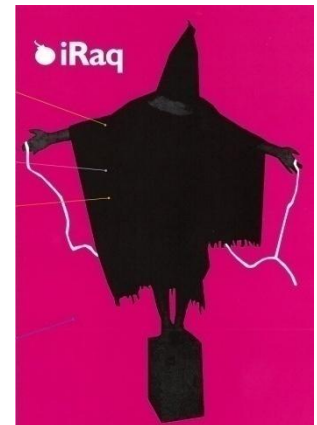
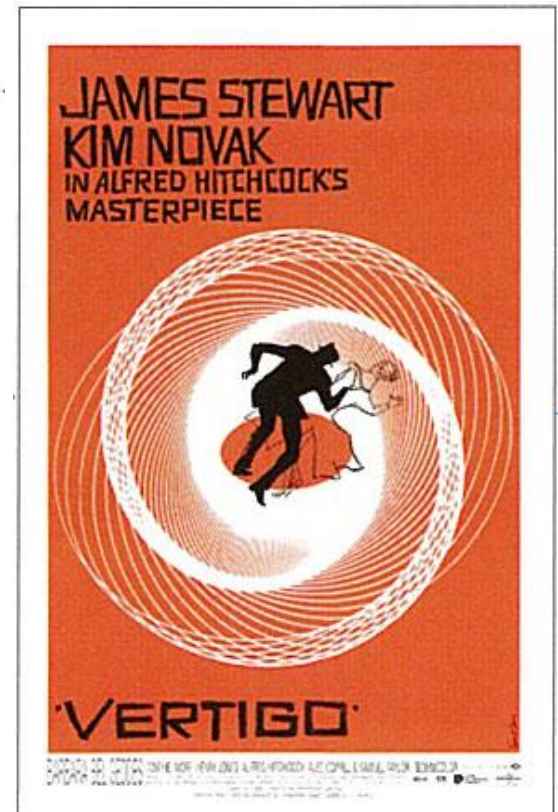
iRaq

# The Graphic Design



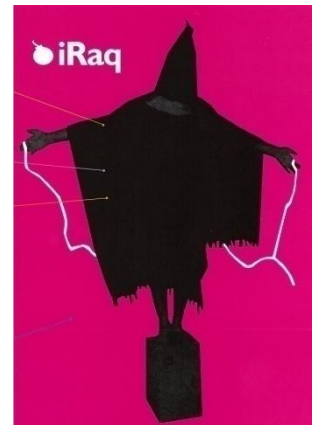
1972 *Ne!* book cover  
d: Roman Cieslewicz  
c: gzh & galerija sc, zagreb

1958 *Vertigo* movie poster  
a: Saul Bass  
Directed by Alfred Hitchcock.  
Poster ©Paramount Pictures.



iRaq

## The Graphic Design



1956 Saxophone Colossus—Sonny Rollins  
record cover  
d,p:Tom Hannan



1900 Motorová Dvoukolka ad  
c:Laurin & Klement

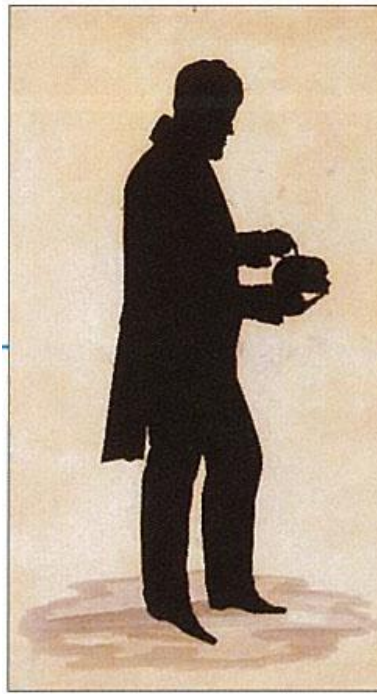


iRaq

# The Graphic Design



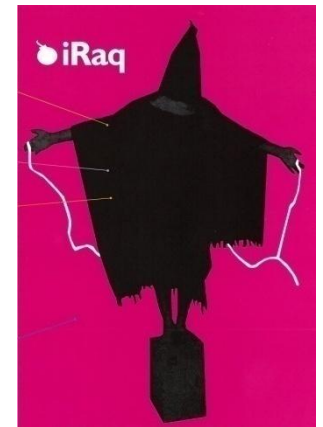
1894 Hamlet poster  
d:The Beggarstaffs  
(William Nicholson and  
James Pryde)



1832 Self-Portrait silhouette  
a:Johann Gaspar Spurzheim  
Self-potrait with skull in hand.  
See Chapter #49



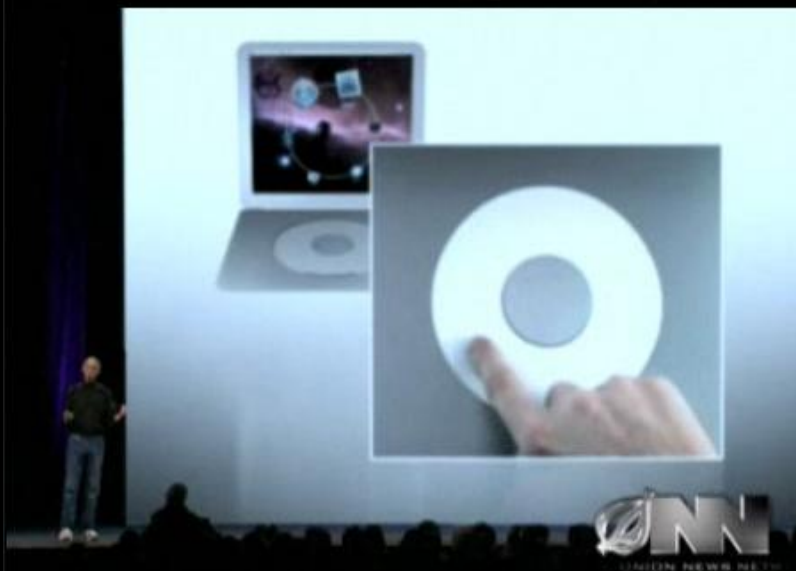
c510-500 BC Black Figured Water  
Jar (hydria) with Mythical and  
Real Scenes  
From Vulci, ancient Etruria (now in  
Lazio, Italy).





# Culture Jamming

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The Apple Wheel | The Onion | 2009



New Sony Product | The Onion | 2009

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